Booklist | 2023

Boston Public Library

Asian/Pacific American Heritage Month

Sabaa Tahir

Alice Wong

Eric Kim

Hinaleimoana Wong-Kalu

Celeste Ng

Aaron Caycedo-Kimura

bpl.org ▪ 700 Boylston Street, Boston MA 02116

The Asian/Pacific American Heritage Month Booklist is a list of recent books concerning the Asian American and Pacific Islander experience.

It is published as part of the Boston Public Library's observance of Asian/Pacific American Heritage Month each year.

This list was compiled by Boston Public Library staff:

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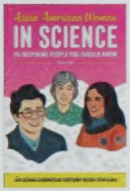
CHILDREN'S



Asian American Women in Science: An Asian American History Book for Kids

Tina Cho (illustrated by María Perera)

Brief inspirational text with illustrations of famous Asian-Americans and short biographies in the back. Recommended for ages 8-12

J Q141 .C46 2022x

Dream, Annie, Dream

Waka T. Brown

Annie lands the lead in her school play, only for her classmates to assume she got it because of her race. Recommended for ages 8-12

J FICTION BROWN W

Freddie vs. the Family Curse

Tracy Badua

Freddie has 13 days to break a curse on an amulet from the Philippines. Recommended for ages 8-12

J FICTION BADUA T

Gigi and Ojiji

Melissa Iwai

A sweet multi-generational story that introduces some Japanese vocabulary while showing that love can overcome cultural differences. Recommended for ages 6-8

J EASY IWAI M

Hana Hsu and the Ghost Crab Nation

Sylvia Liu

In the year 2053, Hana investigates a plot to genetically manipulate her classmates. Recommended for ages 9-12

J SCIFI FANTASY LIU S

How We Say I Love You

Nicole Chen (illustrated by Lenny Wen)

A Taiwanese-American girl thinks about the ways her intergenerational family expresses love, from cooking to foot rubs to kisses goodnight. Recommended for ages 3-7

J PICTURE CHEN N

Hundred Years of Happiness

Thanhhà Lại (illustrated by Phung Nguyen Quang and Huynh Kim Lien)

An's Grandmother Ba has difficulty remembering things. An helps her Grandfather Ông create a special meal to bring back memories of Ba and Ông's wedding in Vietnam. Recommended for ages 4-8

J PICTURE LAI T

available as an audiobook

available as an eBook

graphic novel

I Am Golden

Eva Chen (illustrated by Sophie Diao)

An immigrant couple's love letter to their child provides a message of self-love and empowerment for Chinese American children. Recommended for ages 3-7

J PICTURE CHEN E

Jasmine Toguchi, Brave Explorer

Debbi Michiko Florence (illustrated by Elizabet Vuković)

In the fifth book in the Jasmine Toguchi series, Jasmine tries to cheer up her sister while also dealing with her own problems on a trip to Tokyo. Recommended for ages 6-9

J EARLY CHAPTER FLORENCE D

Kapaemahu

Hinaleimoana Wong-Kalu, Dean Hamer, & Joe Wilson (illustrated by Daniel Sousa)

A bilingual (in Olelo Niihau and English) retelling of the story of four māhū (third gender) Tahitian spirit-beings who bring their healing powers to Hawai'i. Recommended for ages 7-10

J PICTURE WONGKALU H

Luli and the Language of Tea

Andrea Wang (illustrated by Hyewon Yum)

A young Chinese American girl bonds with immigrant children from many cultures through a sharing of tea while their parents take a community ESOL class. Recommended for ages 4-8

J PICTURE WANG A

Marya Khan and the Incredible Henna Party

Saadia Faruqi (illustrated by Ani Bushry)

Marya decides to throw the best henna party ever for her 8th birthday. Recommended for ages 6-9

J EARLY CHAPTER FARUQI S

Mindy Kim and the Fairy-Tale Wedding

Lyla Lee (illustrated by Dung Ho)

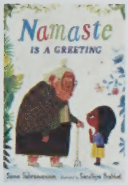
In the seventh book in the Mindy Kim series, Mindy prepares to be the flower girl in her dad's wedding and welcome her new stepmother Julie to their family. Recommended for ages 6-9

J EARLY CHAPTER LEE L

available as an audiobook

available as an eBook

graphic novel



Namaste is a Greeting

Suma Subramaniam (illustrated by Sandhya Prabhat)

A young child's relationship with her elderly neighbor develops through the many-layered meanings of the word "namaste," a common greeting in many Indian languages.
Recommended for ages 4-7

J PICTURE SUBRAMAN S

New From Here

Kelly Yang

Knox and his family, who are Chinese, adjust to life in the U.S. at the start of COVID-19.
Recommended for ages 8-12

J FICTION YANG K

Shapes, Lines, and Light: My Grandfather's American Journey

Katie Yamasaki

Noted picture book author Katie Yamasaki turns for inspiration to the life of another artist: her grandfather, pioneering Japanese American architect Minoru "Yama" Yamasaki.
Recommended for ages 6-8

J BIOG NA737.Y3 Y36 2022

She Persisted: Patsy Mink

Tae Keller (illustrated by Gillian Flint)

An illustrated biography of the first Asian American woman — and first woman of color — to be elected to the U.S. House of Representatives. Recommended for ages 6-10

J BIOG E840.8.M544 K45 2022x

Team Chu and the Battle of Blackwood Arena

Julie C. Dao

Clip and Sadie are polar opposites, but the siblings must put their differences aside after getting stuck in a virtual reality game.
Recommended for ages 8-12

J FICTION DAO J

We Are Here: 30 Asian American and Pacific Islanders Who Have Shaped the United States

Naomi Hirahara (illustrated by Illi Ferandez)

Concise and informative profiles of 30 Americans whose heritages span Asia and the Pacific Islands are paired with portraits conveying the diversity within the AAPI umbrella.
Recommended for ages 6-11

J E184.A75 H567 2022

TEEN

All My Rage

Sabaa Tahir

Working-class Pakistani American teens Salahudin and Noor face challenges that strain their friendship to the breaking point in this National Book Award-winning novel, set in the margins of a small California town.

TEEN FICTION TAHIR S

All the Right Reasons

Bethany Mangle

When Cara's video diary about her father's infidelity goes viral, she and her mother, Julia, find themselves swept away to a reality TV dating competition for single parents. But Cara might be the one to find love on screen.

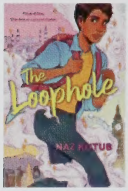
TEEN FICTION MANGLE B

Gold Mountain

Betty G. Yee

Ling Fan seeks opportunity — and money to send home to China — by disguising herself as her dead brother in order to work on the American transcontinental railroad in 1867.

TEEN FICTION YEE B



The Loophole

Naz Kutub

With the help of an unconventional fairy godmother, Sayyed embarks on a fantastical international quest to reunite with his ex-boyfriend and first love Farouk, who left him to travel the world.

TEEN FICTION KUTUB N

Messy Roots

Laura Gao

Originally conceived in response to the outpouring of hatred toward Wuhan at the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, Gao's graphic memoir vividly recounts their childhood in Wuhan, immigration to Texas, coming of age, and coming out.

TEEN GRAPHIC MESSY ROOTS

Once Upon a K-Prom

Kat Cho

Elena isn't excited for prom — she'd rather fundraise for the local community center. When her former best friend, Robbie, now a K-pop idol, reappears and asks her to honor their childhood promise to go to prom together, romcom chaos ensues!

TEEN FICTION CHO K

available as an audiobook

available as an eBook

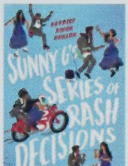
graphic novel

The Silence that Binds Us

Joanna Ho

In the wake of her beloved older brother's death by suicide, May raises her voice and fights back against anti-Asian hate and the myth of the model minority while confronting her own complicity in maintaining the status quo.

TEEN FICTION HO J



Sunny G's Series of Rash Decisions

Navdeep Singh Dhillon

On prom night — and the anniversary of his older brother's death — Sikh teen Sunny and his classmate Mindii ditch in order to attend a fan event for his favorite fantasy book series as part of a cathartic night of rash decisions.

TEEN FICTION DHILLON N

MEMOIR

Fatty Fatty Boom Boom: A Memoir of Food, Fat, and Family

Rabia Chaudry

Chaudry writes vividly of her relationship with her weight and with the cuisines of both Pakistan and America in this food-centric memoir.

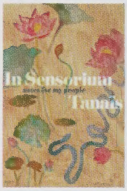
BIOG E184.P28 C53 2022

Go Back to Where You Came From: and Other Helpful Recommendations on How to Become American

Wajahat Ali

With humor and vulnerability, Ali describes his transformation from an awkward immigrant kid to accidental activist in the face of anti-Muslim hatred after 9/11.

BIOG E184.P28 A45 2022



In Sensorium: Notes for My People

Tanaïs

Tanaïs, a self-trained perfumer, uses scent as a frame for exploring their own narrative and that of their family and people in a tapestry of memories, experiences, vulnerabilities, and violence.

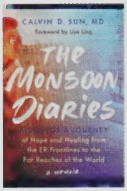
E184.B13 T36 2022x

Ma and Me

Putsata Reang

Journalist Reang reflects on her sometimes fraught relationship with her mother, a Cambodian refugee trapped in a difficult marriage, and the strain on their bond caused by Reang's marriage to a woman.

BIOG HQ75.4.R43 A3 2022

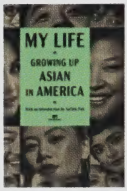


The Monsoon Diaries: A Doctor's Journey of Hope and Healing from the ER Frontlines to the Far Reaches of the World

Calvin D. Sun

An emergency room doctor documents vivid stories of true front-line situations from New York City's hospitals as the coronavirus spreads in early 2020.

BIOG R154.S87 A3 2022x

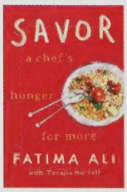


My Life: Growing Up Asian in America

CAPE (Coalition of Asian Pacifics in Entertainment)

Thirty essays, comics, and poems give voice to the multiplicity of Asian American experiences. These works detail the differences but also reflect the similarities Asian Americans feel living in America.

E184.A75 M92 2022x



Savor: A Chef's Hunger for More

Fatima Ali & Tarajia Morrell

The chef and television personality Ali wrote this searingly honest exploration of a life cut short together with her mother, Farezeh, and Tarajia Morrell after receiving a terminal cancer diagnosis at the age of 29.

BIOG TX649.A425 A3 2022

Stay True

Hua Hsu

This intimate coming-of-age story focuses on Hsu's memories as a teenager and as a undergraduate at Berkeley in the late 1990s; centering on his relationship with his friend Ken, whose unexpected death deeply affected him.

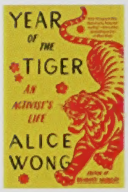
BIOG F868.S156 H78 2022

What My Bones Know: A Memoir of Healing from Complex Trauma

Stephanie Foo

After her complex PTSD diagnosis, Foo's drive to understand herself leads her to explore her own life in the context of the intergenerational traumas and the mental health issues prevalent in Asian American communities.

BIOG RC552.P67 F66 2022



Year of the Tiger: An Activist's Life

Alice Wong

Wong, a disability activist and self-described disabled oracle, gives the reader a fascinating insight into her life in this unique collection of essays, interviews, illustrations, and other ephemera.

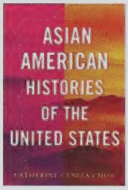
BIOG HV3013.W66 A3 2022x

available as an audiobook

available as an eBook

graphic novel

NONFICTION



Asian American Histories of the United States

Catherine Ceniza Choy

This social history draws on diverse voices to trace nearly 200 years of Asian American experiences of migration, labor and community formation, contributions to politics and culture, and resistance to anti-Asian hate.

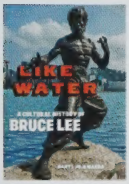
E184.A75 C516 2022

Fierce and Fearless: Patsy Takemoto Mink, First Woman of Color in Congress

Judy Tzu-Chun Wu & Gwendolyn Mink

From her childhood in Hawaii, to her decades-long career in the House, this illustrated biography — co-authored by Mink's daughter — recounts the remarkable life of the Congresswoman best known as an advocate for and defender of Title IX.

BIOG E840.8.M544 W8 2022

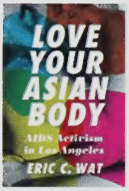


Like Water: A Cultural History of Bruce Lee

Daryl Maeda

A blend of history and biography that places the legendary martial artist, actor, and director in his international historical context; exploring his life, travels, legacy, and global impact in all their depth and complexity.

PN2287.L2897 M34 2022

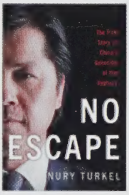


Love Your Asian Body: AIDS Activism in Los Angeles

Eric C. Wat

This community memoir connects the personal and the political in the stories of over thirty Asian American AIDS activists, whose care and advocacy for those living with HIV laid the foundations for their broader social justice work.

RA643.84.C2 W38 2021



No Escape

Nury Turkel

Turkel weaves his own story and that of other escapees to give the reader a powerful, undeniable account of the Chinese government's treatment of the Uyghur people.

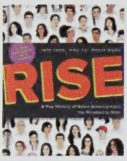
BIOG DS731.U4 T87 2022x

Permission to Come Home: Reclaiming Mental Health as Asian Americans

Jenny T. Wang

Clinical psychologist Wang examines how cultural expectations impact Asian Americans' mental health; offering readers the permission to question, feel rage, say no, take up space, choose, play, fail, and grieve.

RC451.5.A75 W36 2022



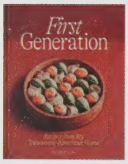
Rise: A Pop History of Asian America from the Nineties to Now

Jeff Yang, Phil Yu & Philip Wang (illustrated by Julia Kuo)

Combining narrative history with accessible and entertaining infographics, timelines, illustrations, and graphic essays, this three-decade survey examines the influences and impacts of Asian Americans in U.S. society and popular culture.

E184.A75 W36 2022x

FOOD WRITING

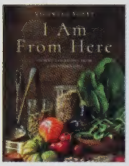


First Generation: Recipes from My Taiwanese-American Home

Frankie Gaw

Gaw explores his identity as a Taiwanese American through food in this ode to his personal and family history. He confidently tackles traditional recipes such as lu rou fan or beef noodle soup as well as innovative American twists.

TX724.5.C5 G39 2022

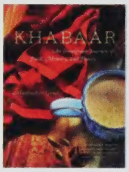


I Am From Here: Stories and Recipes from a Southern Chef

Vishwesh Bhatt

Bhatt writes movingly of his identity as an immigrant from India who has chosen to become a Southern chef in the USA. His use of ingredients and techniques from both India and the American South gives his recipes a unique flair.

TX840.S55 B48 2022



Khabaar: An Immigrant Journey of Food, Memory, and Family

Madhushree Ghosh

Ghosh's non-traditional narrative, which mixes memoir, recipes, food reportage, and history, gives readers a glimpse into how khabaar, which means food in Bengali, has been woven into her transnational experience.

BIOG TX724.5.I4 G474 2022

Korean American: Food That Tastes Like Home

Eric Kim

Kim's deeply personal cookbook draws from his own experiences growing up Korean American in Atlanta and showcases his comfort foods, ranging from traditional Korean to completely American recipes.

TX724.5.K65 K5428 2022

available as an audiobook
available as an eBook
graphic novel

Tabemasho! Let's Eat!: A Tasty History of Japanese Food in America

Gil Asakawa

Asakawa uses his own personal history to illuminate this accessible and fun look at how Japanese food came to America, detailing both what has changed and what has stayed traditional.

TX724.5.J3 A828 2022

The Vegan Chinese Kitchen: Recipes and Modern Stories from a Thousand-Year-Old Tradition

Hannah Che

Che introduces the reader to the techniques and recipes developed in Buddhist temple kitchens used to cook many Chinese recipes with vegan ingredients.

TX837 .C45256 2022

The Woks of Life: Recipes to Know and Love from a Chinese American Family

Bill, Judy, Sarah & Kaitlin Leung

The Leung family, who also created the Woks of Life website, do not disappoint in this cookbook of over 100 Chinese recipes drawn from tradition as well as their own American experiences.

TX840.W65 L58 2022

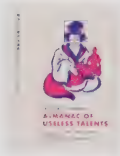
POETRY & ART

All the Flowers Kneeling

Paul Tran

Tran's debut poetry collection is an intimate exploration of transformation, transcendence, and survival. Their powerful poems take on different forms to investigate sexual trauma, violence, and imperialism.

PS3620.R3627 A6 2022x



Almanac of Useless Talents

Michael Chang

In this irreverent and contemporary collection, Chang uses an abundantly experimental style to center queer joy and pleasure in poems that are described by their reviewers as sassy, horny, playful, and sharp.

PS3603.H3573 A76 2022x

Common Grace

Aaron Caycedo-Kimura

References to Boston in this collection —"Away in Boston, Riding the Green Line," as well as the title poem "Common Grace," which references the Charles River, a crew team, and geese — give these poems a familiar, local feel.

PS3603.A978 C66 2022

Muscle Memory

Jenny Liou

In her debut collection, Liou, a former mixed martial artist, writes poems that move deftly between the prizefighter's cage, her identity as the daughter of a Chinese immigrant, and the violence passed down through generations.

PS3612.I597 M87 2022x

Pangaea: Prose and Poetry

Hinnah Mian

Mian explores her identity as a Pakistani American daughter of immigrants, trying to learn who she is and who she is "allowed to be" — delving into topics including sexual assault, domestic violence, racism, and mental health.

PS3613.I26 P36 2022x

The Symmetry of Fish

Su Cho

A debut poetry collection that meditates on rice cakes and kimchi, ghosts and family, memory and forgetting. Cho, who was born in South Korea and raised in Indiana, incorporates Korean in this book that centers "language and lore," and its transformation over time.

PS3603.H625 S96 2022

Time is a Mother

Ocean Vuong

Vuong's second poetry collection explores love, loss, art, and death in different poetic forms that navigate themes of grief and its relationship with language. He writes: "I was made to die but I'm here to stay."

PS3622.U96 A6 2022x

Your Emergency Contact Has Experienced an Emergency

Chen Chen

In his second collection of poetry, Chen writes in tercets, prose poems, and other forms, of family, love, origins, the pandemic, and living as a queer Asian American man.

PS3603.H4471 Y68 2022

FICTION

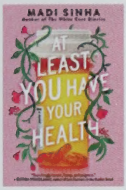
All This Could Be Different

Sarah Thankam Mathews

Recent graduate Sneha's job pays well but always seems to be hanging by a thread. The same goes for her relationships: with her friends Thom and Tig, her parents back in India, and Marina, a ballerina who always feels just out of reach.

FICTION MATHEWS S

available as an audiobook
available as an eBook
graphic novel



At Least You Have Your Health

Madi Sinha

After leaving her stable job at the hospital, Dr. Maya Rao finds herself making house calls for concierge wellness clinic, Eunoia Women's Health. But Maya soon learns that beneath the shiny exterior lies a dangerous secret.

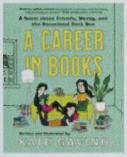
FICTION SINHA M

Booked on a Feeling

Jayci Lee

After suffering from a panic attack, overachieving Lizzy takes a break from her structured life plan and reconnects with her childhood best friend Jack as they try to save a struggling bookstore.

ROMANCE LEE J



A Career in Books: A Novel About Friends, Money, and the Occasional Duck Bun

Kate Gavino

Three friends struggle to navigate their first jobs in the brutal New York City publishing world. They find unexpected counsel from their elderly neighbor, an author who inspires each of them to make their own way in the world of books.

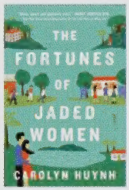
GRAPHIC CAREER IN BOOKS

Counterfeit

Kirstin Chen

When straitlaced mom and lawyer, Ava, reconnects with her former college roommate, Winnie, she becomes swept up in an ingenious crime scheme importing counterfeit luxury handbags.

FICTION CHEN K

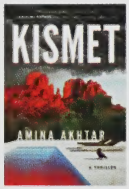


The Fortunes of Jaded Women

Carolyn Huynh

The Duong women have been cursed for generations, unable to find love or happiness — until a prophecy foretelling a wedding, a funeral, and the birth of a son unites the estranged family, for better or for worse.

FICTION HUYNH C



Kismet

Amina Akhtar

Lifelong New Yorker Ronnie trades city life and family pressures for a desert retreat in Sedona with her friend and wellness guru, Marley. On a journey to find her true self, Ronnie instead finds herself fearing for her life.

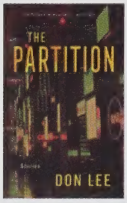
FICTION AKHTAR A

Our Missing Hearts

Celeste Ng

In a society consumed by fear, 12-year-old Bird receives a mysterious letter and sets out on a quest to find his mother. His journey leads him to New York City, where a new act of defiance may be the beginning of much-needed change.

FICTION NG C



The Partition

Don Lee

This short story collection offers a fresh exploration of Asian American identity that takes readers all the way from Boston to Tokyo to Honolulu and beyond as it grapples with universal questions of life and love.

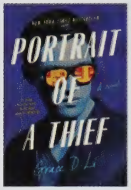
FICTION LEE D

Partners in Crime

Alisha Rai

While settling her aunt's affairs with the help of Naveen — a lawyer and man she once rejected — Mira finds herself in a mad dash through Las Vegas, following clues to untangle the mess her family left behind.

ROMANCE RAI A

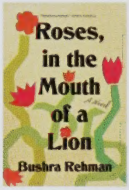


Portrait of a Thief

Grace D. Li

Harvard student Will Chen is offered a (very illegal) chance to return five priceless stolen treasures to China. He assembles a team of fellow students, chosen for their skills and loyalty, to help him on his heist — and make history.

FICTION LI G



Roses, in the Mouth of a Lion

Bushra Rehman

Razia chafes against the restrictions of her tight-knit Pakistani Muslim community. At her prestigious school in Manhattan, Razia falls in love with Angela, and is forced to choose between her family and her future.

FICTION REHMAN B

The School for Good Mothers

Jessamine Chan

After one moment of poor judgment involving her daughter, Frida Liu finds herself turned over to a dystopian government institution that measures the success or failure of a mother's devotion.

FICTION CHAN J

available as an audiobook

available as an eBook

graphic novel

The Swimmers

Julie Otsuka

When a crack appears at the bottom of the local public swimming pool, the swimmers are left without the solace of their routines — including Alice, who is losing her memory.

FICTION OTSUKA J

The Verifiers

Jane Pek

Claudia isn't interested in a conventional career or a nice Chinese boy. Her secret job fact-checking online dating profiles seems perfect — until one of her first clients turns up dead.

MYSTERY PEK J

Which Side Are You On

Ryan Lee Wong

Young Asian American activist Reed devotes himself to the Black Lives Matter movement, but is challenged by his mother — who was once the leader of a Korean-Black coalition — to rethink his outrage and activism

FICTION WONG R

Boston Public Library

Asian/Pacific American Heritage Month

Booklist | 2023

The Asian/Pacific American Heritage Month booklist is a list of recent books concerning the Asian American and Pacific Islander experience. It is published as part of the Boston Public Library's observance of Asian/Pacific American Heritage Month each year.

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